

THE CCF: OUR TASKS AND PERSPECTIVES

By Ross Dowsn (*annotated ver. Internet-archive.org*)

The central document around which the discussion at our 1946 national convention developed which culminated in the formation of the Revolutionary Workers Party, an independent party competing for the adherence of the Canadian workers with the CCF and the Stalinist Labor Progressive Party (LPP), was entitled PERSPECTIVES OF THE CANADIAN SECTION. The bulk of this document was devoted to an analysis of the CCF. "The key to the growth of the Canadian Trotskyist movement," it said, "depends on a correct appraisal and attitude towards the CCF."

At that time we characterised the CCF as "predominantly an agrarian social democratic party with its primary base in the prairie radicalism of the western farmers... its membership in the major industrial cities of the East primarily middle class with a small sprinkling of highly skilled workers." To the question "Will the CCF succeed in becoming a genuine labor party based on the unions," we replied... "It is not possible to answer this question conclusively." But we did answer for the next period, "Such a development appears out of the question in the next period."

The document held out the perspective of independent growth of our forces in the fact that the Canadian working class were on the verge of the vast economic struggles that swept over the country in the following spring and summer of that year (1946) and, (since the CCF was of a "middle class character" isolated "from the struggles of the workers") in the conviction that the "workers will not find in the CCF a party to attract their allegiance." Added to this was the conception that the revolutionary struggles shaking Europe and the possible mass growth of the parties of the Fourth International would make the situation more favourable for the independent party. All this notwithstanding the document continued: "at the present time we must consider a new revival of the CCF in the next few years as the most likely variant."

It said: "Our firm unalterable principled opposition towards the reformist CCF must be supplemented by flexible tactics changing in accordance with the changing relationship of forces. Thus under certain conditions a revival of the French Turn might be necessary while under others a campaign for direct affiliation of our tendency as a party to the CCF may be indicated. For the next period, however our main energies must be devoted to the building of the independent party of the 4th International in Canada, sinking its influence in the unions, rooting itself in the working class. In this way we shall be in a much better position to influence the development of any left wing tendency that may arise in the CCF in the future."

The RWP from the day of its formal organisation up until now has had a CCF orientation. Our tactical approach since then has shifted within the framework of this general orientation. Up until September 1948 our tactical approach remained in keeping with that outlined in the 1946 convention resolution -- the main emphasis on the building of the independent party. **It was then that our party in its press *Labor Challenge* marked out a major turn in Canadian politics in its conclusion that the CCF, from an analysis of the campaign around the 1948 elections, had become the political party of organized labor.**

In an organisational report appearing in the June 1949 *Internal Bulletin* the national secretary called upon the party to "now make CCF fraction work a more serious part of party work," urging

that "all branches should go through their membership rolls and assign where possible suitable comrades to carry on this phase of our work which is undoubtedly going to assume greater and greater importance."

At a later date it may be advisable that we carry out an entry into the CCF. A few months later the National Committee discussed the advisability due to a favorable left-wing development in the B.C. section of the CCF of entry there by our party cadre and urged the Vancouver branch to seriously consider the matter. Out of this discussion came a document from a leading member of the Vancouver branch appearing in the March 1950 bulletin. Shortly after the International Secretariat made known to us (April 1950 bulletin) that it was generally in favor of our making an entry into the CCF.

What has happened to the CCF since the rounded analysis made at the 1946 founding convention? Is there any need to re-evaluate the general orientation we adopted then? Have these tactical shifts, the increasing of the Toronto and Vancouver CCF fraction to a limitation of independent party work been correct? Does the tactic of carrying out an entry into the CCF, building the revolutionary vanguard by going into the CCF, stand posed before the party?

The 1945 resolution declared that since the 1943 elections the CCF has moved steadily to the right. We have nothing to revise in this estimation. The official policy of the party has continued on in its rightward course at an increasing tempo. From having been the capitalist governments' representatives at the U.N. "as an instrument of peace" the CCF has become an apologist of the UN as an instrument of war. The 1950 CCF National Convention went on record as demanding Canadian participation, cajoling the cautious St. Laurent government for not sending Canadian troops, in the counter-revolutionary intervention in the Korean civil war. The Coldwell leadership endorsed the Marshall Plan with both hands and, after overcoming a few qualms and rank and file resistance, committed the movement to all-out support of the Atlantic Pact. The foreign policy of the CCF in all essentials is an identity with that of the capitalist government, at one with its war on the colonial revolutions, its rearmament of European reaction and its casting of Canada in the role of a junior partner in Wall Street's preparations for the assault on the USSR.

The CCF leadership has demonstrated, without even the glories of office that its British cousins bask in, its complete willingness to condone all the consequences of their and the government's foreign policy. With just a few gestures of reservations they echo Claxton and Abbott's austerity talk urging labor to increase production as a contribution to curb the profiteers' inflationary price increases. The Emergency Powers Act and Defence Production Act, the blue-print for the Bonapartist state, were slipped through the house by the St. Laurent government with the support of the CCF M.P.s who chided the government for its failure to use these dictatorial powers to enact price controls. Far from resisting the imposition on the backs of the Canadian people of the 5 billion dollar war budget the CCF leadership voices dissatisfaction with the government's lack of "preparedness." There is no talk by the CCF of opposing conscription this time, even with the phony "No conscription of Manpower without Conscription of Wealth."

The CCF leadership which once carried on a campaign for the repeal of the notorious Section 98 is now, despite the lessons of the US witch hunt, much more circumspect in committing itself to the defence of the civil rights of the first target of the witch hunters, the Stalinist LPP. An Alberta CCF trade union leader has even called for the internment of "communists".

The long and increasingly rapid rightward swing of the CCF has been consolidated in the programmatic documents of that party. At the 1948 convention a concerted campaign was waged to free the party from commitments on the question of nationalisation of Canadian economy, mainly its credit and financial institutions.

The 1950 convention divested the party program of the increasingly embarrassing pacifist commitments contained in the foundation document, the *Regina Manifesto*.

The regime has hardened; the CCF in the past period has become more bureaucratized. The old discussion atmosphere has given way to that of an electoral machine. Through a series of far-reaching precedents the parliamentary leadership has assumed the right to commit the party to all kinds of stands at variance with the last expressed will of the membership. At the 1950 Vancouver convention the national leadership established its right to move in on the heretofore relatively autonomous rights of the provincial sections in the field of internal discipline.

The many expressions of opposition to the rightward course of the party have been brutally suppressed, the latest being the ban leveled on the B.C. Fellowship composed of long standing and activist members of the CCF by the provincial and national leaderships and condoned by the B.C. convention.

Three years of more or less intense CCF fraction work have verified the fact that, with regional variations, the CCF constituency clubs are functioning on a very low level of political activity. There has been a large drop in active membership. There is little young blood in the party and there is no new blood coming into it at this time.

The active membership is basically petty bourgeois and skilled working class, worker militants are rare. The average age is quite high, the political level and even political interest is extremely low, with the main energies of the membership directed to money raising schemes and social affairs.

The CCF exists in Quebec and the Maritimes on a very feeble basis... in the Quebec elections of 1944 it had five times as many candidates as in 1948. Its Saskatchewan membership drive, where it holds political power, fell 10,000 short last year. The B.C. section where it has polled almost 35% of the vote, reports a turnover in membership from 20 to 40%. The B.C. section records the following fall in membership (membership constitutes the paying of \$2 a year plus whatever individual constituency clubs may levy from time to time):

Jan. 1946 6,277 Jan. 1947 4,975 Jan. 1948 4,483 Jan. 1949 4,536 Jan. 1950 4,425 In the Welland by-election, the only electoral evidence since the 1949 election other than the recent Waterloo South and Winnipeg Centre by-elections, the CCF vote dropped precipitously.

The youth movement is defunct. The B.C. CCYM was reported at the latest provincial convention to number only 32 members. The Ontario section claims 250 but the only thriving section appears to be the Saskatchewan section.

IT WOULD BE A FUNDAMENTAL ERROR HOWEVER TO EVALUATE THE CCF, ITS PRESENT OR ITS FUTURE, MERELY ON THE ABOVE FACTS... AN ERROR WHICH WOULD HAVE TRAGIC CONSEQUENCES FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR MOVEMENT. IN ORDER TO HAVE A CORRECT EVALUATION OF THE ABOVE FACTS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE, IT IS

NECESSARY TO REMAIN WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF OUR WORLD OUTLOOK, TO UNDERSTAND THE PERSPECTIVE OF REFORMISM IN THIS MOST REVOLUTIONARY EPOCH. AT THE SAME TIME, IT IS NECESSARY TO FULLY APPRECIATE THE LEVEL OF POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND EXPERIENCE OF THE CANADIAN WORKING CLASS... TO BE ENTIRELY FREE FROM REVOLUTIONARY ROMANTICISM - TO BE REVOLUTIONARY REALISTS.

It is no longer possible, the above evidence notwithstanding, to talk with a question mark, as did our 1946 resolution, as to whether the CCF will "succeed in becoming a genuine labor party based on the unions." It is necessary to record clearly and without any equivocation or reservations that the CCF is the political arm of labor, that it is the Canadian labor party, that it has long passed the stage where its future development as a labor party in the full meaning of the term, as applied to the British Labor Party which encompasses the class, is in any doubt whatsoever.

As Comrade Kane recorded in the June 1942 *Internal Bulletin*, "Political action of the Canadian workers has taken a reformist detour. Today's expression of working class independent political action is the CCF. It is a mass party... it expresses an elemental move on the part of the masses into independent political action ... it is the political manifestation of the Canadian working class."

The CCF is not a third capitalist party but a mass party of the workers and farmers of this country. Despite its petty bourgeois, its reformist program, it is a class party, a party of the proletariat.

The decline in CCF membership, the apathy in its ranks, the low political level of its membership, does not reflect any fundamental disillusionment on the part of the class with the CCF, programmatically or organisationally. The workers have not rejected the CCF. They are not on the verge of by-passing it at the next turn of events and flooding into the revolutionary party. On the contrary all these phenomena are merely the reflection of the general political inexperience, as yet, of the class as a whole, signs of its immaturity.

As Comrade Pilar on behalf of the International Secretariat wrote us last year, the CCF's "Stagnations and present decline" is "explainable in large part by objective conditions (the transitory relative prosperity that exists in Canada"...) and of course the repercussions these conditions have on the consciousness of the masses.

The above picture of the political apathy and organisational decline of the CCF is an entirely lopsided one, taken outside of time and place. Since its origin in a coalition of agrarian and working class movements 18 years ago, the CCF has become a mass Canadian-wide movement. It has 13 members in the House of Commons, in one province it has been elected and re-elected to power. It is the official opposition in several provinces; the bourgeois parties are in coalition against it in several others. Since 1943 the mass industrial unions organised in the CCL-CIO (*Canadian Congress of Labour/CIO, the Canadian and US industrial union federations*) have endorsed it as their political arm. In recent years we have witnessed the translation of this resolution from paper into Political Action Committees in the CCL unions, actively participating in the CCF campaigns behind candidates that reflect this development. Important support for the CCF has arisen in the traditionally anti-political TLC-AFL (*Trades & Labour Congress-AFL, the Canadian and US craft union federations --Ed.*)

It is by no means permissible to look upon the CCF as an episodic development in Canadian political life, a transitory movement without perspective. It is a movement with deep roots in Canadian life. Even where it is weakest, the Alberta section for instance, from which it draws no federal seats and where there are only 2 CCF provincial members, whose paper recently reverted from publication on a weekly basis to an every other weekly basis, the movement has deep roots. The president of the Farmers Union of Alberta, the presidents of both the CCL and TLC Edmonton Labor Councils, even the president of the Alberta Teachers Association, are CCFers. It has a nationwide political apparatus. Although it has so far shied away from the municipal political field it has representatives in municipal bodies in such industrial towns in Ontario as Timmins, North Bay, Welland, Thorold, Samia, and Stratford. Last year its candidate in Toronto polled over 66,000 votes.

All evidence that pictures the CCF as a moribund movement requires much more than a surface examination -- for instance the drop in CCF representation in the Ontario house in the 1945 elections from 34 to 8 seats was the result of a drop in votes from 418,520 to 395,708 less than 5%. Despite the decline in membership in 1948, the year between '46-'50 when B.C. membership was smallest, the CCF had 2,000 clubs and a membership of 70,000 scattered across the country. The day of the provincial election that year the Ontario section was able to mobilise 10,000 volunteer workers. The B.C. membership went down to a low of 4,425 in 1950 but the breakdown is of importance to understand just what this means. Since 1,891 of this figure represents new memberships apparently several thousand did not renew. The experience of our own fraction with this work, tells us that non-renewals reflect not so much disillusionment with the CCF as political apathy, and such renewals are easily obtained if picked up.

The CCF may have had its federal representation cut by the 1949 election from 32 to 13 seats but its vote remained at its previous level of almost 15% of the total. The Stalinist vote in those few ridings where it opposed the CCF declined drastically. In other words the working class did not express opposition to the CCF of a left character but failed to continue on, in its swing away from capitalist politics, thanks in large part to the CCF's electoral policy. While the CCF did not gain ground in the 1949 elections on a national scale, there is an aspect of the vote which is important to note -- there was a shift in its support from the Prairies to the industrial ridings; in the Toronto ridings its vote rose from 85,115 in 1945 to 114,896.

Active membership in the CCF has dropped but the 1950 National Expansion drive was a big success. At Similkameen B.C. where "the organisation through the riding is at a low ebb" provincial leaders coming from the outside were able to raise \$655, "the highest figure of any riding." In 6 days they were able to raise \$2,000 in the Yale (B.C.) Federal Riding.

The CCF has only a skeleton of a movement in Quebec, but this tells us more about the level of political maturity and experience of the Quebec workers than it does about the CCF. With due allowance to the fact that the CCF compromised itself on the conscription question during the last war (which it is necessary to note the Liberals and Tories and the LPP also did), it is a fact that the proletarianization and unionization of Quebec is a recent phenomena, that Quebec is the stronghold of Catholicism and bourgeois reaction in this country, that there are no signs of working class political action developing outside of the CCF.

THE PARTY OF ORGANIZED LABOR IN FORM

Against all the evidence of the decline in activity, political apathy within the constituency clubs and their non-industrial working class character, if such evidence is thought to cast some doubt as to the future development of the CCF, must be placed the evidence of the development which our 1946 resolution thought probable but at that time placed in small question marks: "Will the CCF succeed in becoming a genuine labor party based on the unions?"

This has been answered in a positive and conclusive way by the change in relationship of the organised labor movement to the CCF and by the shift in the CCF's mass base. It is these facts that are decisive in determining what the CCF is and its future course of development.

The CCL convention of 1943 endorsed the CCF as the political arm of labor. Every year since then this massive assembly of the industrially organized proletariat of this country has reaffirmed this stand. In 1945 for the last time the TLC convention endorsed the Liberal Party; since then important sections of the TLC and whole strata of its lower leadership have moved towards the CCF. The great majority of the top leaders and the secondary leadership of the CCL-CIO affiliated unions are members of the CCF, many of them holding key posts in provincial and national bodies of the CCF. Many of the key leaders of TLC-AFL unions and administrative bodies have leading posts in the CCF.

The decisive shift of the organised labor movement towards the CCF took place in 1948. In that year the Ontario provincial convention of the TLC almost unanimously passed a resolution "to ditch the two old line parties." The same year, just prior to the Ontario elections, the Ontario Federation of Labor (CCL) set itself an objective of \$100,000 to support the CCF campaign and placed 18 of its full-time organizers to work through the PACs, behind CCF candidates. While few unions, either CCL or TLC, have affiliated to the CCF, last year the CCL PACs were given a permanent status with a national organizational set-up and the regular publication of a PAC monthly newsletter.

THE PARTY OF LABOR IN CONTENT

Despite endorsement by the CCL, as long as the base of the CCF remained fundamentally agrarian, its future course remained somewhat of a question mark. But the 1948 federal by-elections, the '48 provincial elections and every election since then, has pointed up the decisive shift in the base of the CCF from the rural agrarian areas in this country to the industrial urban areas.

In the 1948 Ontario elections, with the dynamic intervention of the PACs, the CCF surpassed its 1943 poll to register 459,950 votes and to gain 14 more seats out of the 90 in the Ontario house. Even though it increased its vote the CCF did not hold its own in the rural areas

it dropped three northern seats but won 17 new seats mostly in Canada's industrial heartland, the Toronto area. A high proportion of its candidates were trade union leaders. The vote in Saskatchewan (the agrarian province par excellence) in 1948 showed the same trend. While the CCF was re-elected with an increase in vote of 12%, in the 34 rural seats its vote declined 4%. The CCF took all 6 seats in urban Saskatoon with an increase in vote of 66% and won 4 of the 5 mixed rural and urban seats in the province. In Alberta the CCF's main influence is in the urban areas with one seat in both Calgary and Edmonton.

While the CCF vote in the 1949 federal election dropped 1.4% and it failed to increase its seats in Ontario over the one that it previously held, its vote in the Toronto ridings increased to equal that which it polled in the 1948 provincial election. It lost ground in the Prairie provinces, but gained votes in the industrial areas across the country.

REFLECTS THE REAL SITUATION IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT

The failure of the CCF to register new gains, the low level of political consciousness of its membership, the general non-industrial proletarian character of the constituency clubs, the lack of interest in the PACs does not signify instability of the CCF as a movement, does not tell us that the CCF as a political movement is slipping to its doom and we are on the verge of witnessing the political development of the workers taking another course.

Since 1946 the entire labor movement has undergone an extensive period of lull. The massive economic organisations of the Canadian worker, the unions, following the inspiring upsurge of 1946, have been passive. Only now can we see the beginnings of a shift in the temper of the workers under the pressure of inflationary wage cuts, new taxes, etc. Having sunk such deep roots into the ranks of the masses it is not at all surprising that the CCF should reflect the mood of the masses; indeed, how could it possibly be otherwise.

Just as today it reflects the real situation in the Canadian labor movement, the lull and apathy that has permeated it, so tomorrow it will reflect the rising militancy of the workers. Those workers now in the movement will be transformed in the same way as capitalism will transform the workers who today do not attend union meetings, who have to be prodded to pay their dues, who are anti- or nonpolitical. The class, searching for a political solution to its problems will flood into the CCF, will grasp it and attempt to shape it into an instrument to solve their problems.

Under the pressure of capitalist reaction, freed from the pressure of the working class which is confused and apathetic, the Coldwell leadership has turned on the remnants of the socialist groupings that helped found the movement, the pacifists and the few elements that have developed a class consciousness through the experience of the pre- and post-war international developments. It felt it both necessary and free to draw the balance sheet of the past decade of development by shucking off that embarrassing remnant of the past, the *Regina Manifesto*.

The rightward swing of the CCF has disillusioned many of its old supporters. New elements of workers, witness to its opportunism, have developed a critical attitude to the movement. But the CCF has by no means spent the capital that it has accumulated over the past 18 years. The disillusionment and critical attitude of restricted layers of workers has not found its expression in their shifting their allegiance to a party whose program more closely resembles the old CCF or is more left.

UNDER BOURGEOIS NOT PROLETARIAN PRESSURE

The present rightward shift of the CCF is not a retreat before the leftward pressure of the Canadian workers. It can more correctly be said to flow from the general absence of such pressures. It is

capitulation to bourgeois pressure, to a considerable degree in the sense of adaptation to the level of present political consciousness and experience of the workers as a whole.

It is true that there is little room for any extensive reforms, and the war drive is narrowing this possibility, but there is still a little latitude for the bourgeoisie to grant a few crumbs (witness St. Laurent's passage of old age pensions) and the CCF thinks there is much more for them. The CCF is not in power nor is it confronted with a revolutionary crisis causing it to turn on the masses (registering this in its program and the internal life of the party) as only now in any real sense are its British counterparts, inheritors of a bankrupt economy doing.

The CCF leadership seeks the respect and good opinion of the bourgeoisie. In the face of the swelling global class conflict it sees its future at stake in the security of Canadian capitalist society. But this is only one aspect of the explanation of their opportunism. In the last federal elections the Coidwell leadership gave underhand support to the Liberals as the lesser evil than the Tories. We think this in large part is attributable to its willingness to adapt itself to what it estimates the political consciousness of the population to be, for who can say that the CCF leadership does not want more votes, more seats in the House of Commons etc.?

THE WORKING CLASS, AS THEY ARE

It is necessary to look at the Canadian working class without illusions, free of all concepts of what we would like it to be or what it should be. The Canadian working class have the second highest living and working standard in the world. They have demonstrated their willingness to launch out in the most militant actions to prevent any infringements of it, thereby pointing to their great revolutionary potentialities. They are, despite the fact that the CCF is a party of reforms relatively free of reformist prejudices, approaching the CCF with no strong loyalties or confidence in its program nor the suitability of its leadership. They have suffered no soul shattering defeats. The meteoric rise of the industrial unions, their revolutionary ingenuity as demonstrated in the massive 1946 strike wave by the Ford auto barricade, disclose their capacity to take at a single leap the long paths followed by their European brothers. But nonetheless their experiences remain quite limited, they move empirically; they are without political class consciousness let alone socialist consciousness.

The very workers who seized the vehicles to erect the massive Windsor auto barricade voted Liberal Paul Martin into office and returned racketeer Mayor Reaume time and again; their union UAW only last month finally tying in its forces behind the rest of the CCL to support CCF.

The red baiting drive has found considerable receptivity in the ranks of Canadian labor as has the capitalist propaganda campaign that the war threat comes from a USSR ready to pounce on Canada and implant the Kremlin dictatorship on this soil. The bourgeois propaganda that the colonial struggles are Moscow inspired has even won considerable support. While the majority of the Canadian people oppose the Korean imperialist adventure there is not active opposition to it even to the degree that there is in the US -- Canadian casualties at the time of writing number only 44 and public concern is further undercut by the fact that the entire force is a voluntary one, labeled by one staid and influential bourgeois journal as "bums and social misfits."

BETRAYED THE CLASS BUT NOT ITS CONSCIOUSNESS

One of the fundamental characteristics of reformism is its crass opportunism, its ability to smell out the level of consciousness of the workers, their weak points and their inexperience, and give them what they want, adapt itself to the situation regardless of the long range interests of the class.

When the CCF supported the Marshall Plan and the Atlantic Pact it betrayed socialist principles. When it ditched the *Regina Manifesto*, summing up its rightward swing of the past decade and swinging even further to the right, it betrayed its origins. When it supported Korean UN intervention and even urged Canadian participation in the slaughter it betrayed a revolutionary struggle, not to speak of common humanity; BUT BY NONE OF THESE ACTS, WE REPEAT, NOT ONE, DID THE CANADIAN WORKERS FEEL THEMSELVES BETRAYED BY THE CCF. **In none of these acts did the CCF swing further to the right than the present effective thinking of the class.**

While Coldwell and the Vancouver convention went on the record favouring Canadian participation in the counter-revolutionary intervention in Korea, thus flying in the face of the results of the Gallup poll, the party's flanks were covered by the militant anti-imperialist, antiwar speeches of Premier Douglas of Saskatchewan who is without much doubt the most popular leader that the CCF possesses. It was also widely known that there was a powerful opposition in many sections of the CCF, not only to Korean intervention but to the Marshall Plan and the Atlantic Pact.

IN ADVANCE OF THE CLASS

The CCF, right now, its present revised program and all, does not just reflect the present level of consciousness of the workers. The CCF IS IN ADVANCE OF THE THINKING OF THE CANADIAN WORKING CLASS. Regardless of certain aspects of its program which may be debated to be to the right of the class, in its fundamental significance -- working class political action -- it is in advance of the class -- it leads the class.

This is of course the basis of our orientation -- critical support of' the CCF -- a position that we have held since the re-formation of the party in 1944. As we have summed it up many times in the pages of our press since then "the CCF represents the first strivings of the Canadian workers into the realm of working class politics. The CCF is a progressive break from the bourgeois parties, the CCF represents the principle of political action by labor independent of the bourgeois parties.. ." This is not giving anything to this reformist movement but a simple recognition of fact.

There is no end of proof that the CCF is in advance of the Canadian workers, thus playing an essentially progressive role. Every comrade cannot help but be aware of it in day to day life. There are course workers who oppose the CCF for radical reasons, but there is a vast difference between the shadow and the substance. To a limited extent with some workers, through its recent development, the CCF has spent its capital. It has impeded some workers from developing a political class consciousness in the same way as have the crimes of the British Labor Party, observed by many Canadian workers. **But the CCF, a mass party of labor, is still in advance of the class as a whole. The class has yet to generalize its trade union consciousness and militancy into political consciousness, either reformist or revolutionary. We remain of course confident that this lack will be as speedily overcome as the lack of industrial**

unions was overcome (won in the massive new "industrial-union" drive spurred by WW2 armaments demands – Ed.)

INCONTROVERTIBLE EVIDENCE

Three incidents might be given however that with crystal clarity verify the statement that the CCF is in advance of the class and for that matter that section which is union conscious.

1) -- A post 1949 federal election Gallup poll which revealed that the CCF was strongest among young people, union labor, non-farm people and members of other denominations than the 3 most powerful churches, also reported that union labor in its majority still votes Liberal (Liberal 42%, PC 17%, CCF 34%. The CCF over-all polled 14.1% of the vote).

2) -- The CBRE, (*Railway Brotherhood --Ed.*) one of the few unions which has locals affiliated to the CCF, circulated a letter sometime in February of this year asking locals their opinion on the matter of affiliation to the CCF. According to reports in their journals as of the May issue, four locals responded, all rejecting endorsement of the CCF. Their secretaries reported in the following words: "the membership as a whole are definitely against any political ties... the meeting quickly poured cold water on the idea ... an animated discussion followed resulting in a negative vote condemning all political action on the part of the Brotherhood. .. received a very cold shoulder after a lengthy debate. As one person put it: 'You take away a man's freedom when you are told which party one must support'! Not one of these locals is among the many that opposed the recent settlement of their nation wide strike by the Mosher-Hall leadership which was represented in the house by the CCF M.P.s.

3) -- The bourgeois press recently played up the rejection by the Ontario Federation of Printing Trades Unions of a motion coming from the Toronto printing trades urging endorsement of the CCF. The passed resolution replaced the specification "CCF" with the word "favorable" candidates. The resolution however praised the CCF MLAs (*Provincial Members of the Legislature*) and MPs (*Federal Members of Parliament -Ed.*) for their "support and sympathy" and condemned the Liberal federal and Tory provincial governments. Only 2 speakers were quoted favoring the change, one of whom said "anybody in the trade should know that they (the CCF) are the only candidates that are favorable." The chairman of the resolutions committee justified the change on the basis that he thought many members would resent the conference telling them precisely how to vote ? the strong lead was sufficient.

THE UNION BUREAUCRACY ADVANCES POLITICAL ACTION

The union bureaucracy supports the CCF. The top leaders of the CCL-CTO not only support the party but Steel director Milliard is an MPP, Packinghouse leader Dowling CCL representative to the WCFTU, and others, are on the leading- bodies of the CCF, both provincially and nationally.

This is the same bureaucracy which played such a treacherous role in the 1946 strike struggles, which has failed completely to give leadership in the fight against inflationary wage cuts, that has been conducting a witch hunt in the locals -- a bureaucracy which is understood to be such, has been revealed as such, to fairly broad layers of the workers.

How is it that a force which plays such a role on the economic front can be advancing a policy which we have shown as advancing on the political front a policy which is progressive and in advance of the class as a whole? How does this effect the struggle for a new leadership in the unions?

It would be ludicrous to change our orientation to the CCF in the interest of bringing it into what may appear to be harmony with our evaluation of the class-collaborationist, cowardly role of the trade union bureaucracy, and the task we have set ourselves to replace them with a revolutionary leadership policy. It would be necessary to do violence to the facts.

The facts of the matter are, the CCL bureaucracy and layers of the TLC leadership have dynamically introduced, projected, the conception of political action into the unions. The Mosher-Conroy leadership (with the aid of the Trotskyists) put the CCL on record as endorsing the CCF as the political arm of labor at the 1943 convention against a powerful opposition of anti-politicos and the Stalinists whose spokesmen demagogically attempted to frame their opposition so as to appear to be a matter of democratic control of the CCF policy bodies (the Stalinists then were in open alliance with the capitalist Liberal Party.) Ever since then the CCL bureaucracy has carried the ball for political action in the locals, setting up committees, raising funds, etc. That the PACs (Political Action Committees) have not yet won a wide and enthusiastic rank and file participation is due largely to workers' failure to appreciate the need of them.

While it is true that a mass influx of the workers into the PACs would hold real dangers for the trade union and the CCF leaderships, it is not correct to say that they have been the real barrier to the union ranks taking over the CCF from the constituency clubs. The terms of union affiliation and participation on CCF policy making bodies are by no means of such a character as to discourage union intervention once the rank and file feel the need to do so. (One delegate per 100 members **of the union** -- one delegate for each additional 50, constituency club representation we understand is 1 delegate for each 50 and every major part thereof).

THE BUREAUCRACY'S CONTRADICTION -- NOT OURS

The explanation of this contradiction, and there obviously is a contradiction in the conservative trade union bureaucracy advancing this policy which is in advance of the general level of consciousness of the workers, lies in the dual role of the trade union bureaucracy, a phenomenon which we have used to explain the far more complex idea of the dual role of the Kremlin oligarchy, a phenomenon which revolutionists have always fully understood. This conservative bureaucracy which collaborates with the bosses is based on the unions. In the interests of self-preservation, of extending its base, even in its desire to cut the figure in the eyes of the bourgeoisie which it feels its powers warrant, the trade union bureaucracy is sometimes capable of radical actions... actions taken not under the pressure of the workers who may be quiescent, in other words actions in advance of the workers. Such, in the opinion of our American comrades, was the case, in the American bureaucracy's withdrawal from Washington's war mobilisation agencies.

Our political resolutions have explained the basic factors that drove the Canadian labor movement onto the road of political action prior to the US labor movement. To these objective factors we might add, the conscious role of the CCL leaders, some of whom came out of the shops with the rise of the CIO, others from the CCF, "socialists" already convinced, in advance of the class, of the need for political action. The

CCF, possessing a considerable apparatus at the time of the rise of the mass industrial unions was able to place personnel in key positions and to go up with the movement as a whole.

The fact that the trade union bureaucracy at this time on the all-important question of political action plays a generally progressive role, does not cause us for one moment to mitigate our struggle to replace it. If at this juncture we see eye to eye with them on the all-important need for political action, and may appear in a way to be part of them to some workers who understand the nature of the trade union bureaucracy but not the need for political action, we are miles apart as to what the politics of this political action should be. At any rate those who would struggle against the bureaucracy without a political program are doomed to defeat.

THE STRUGGLE IS POLITICAL

The political resolution correctly placed the struggle for a new leadership in the unions on the same general plane as the struggle for a new leadership in the CCF. Every economic struggle is becoming more and more clearly a political struggle. Each economic struggle more and more confronts the trade unions with a centralized capitalist adversary organised in the state power. The economic struggle waged by this or that union against individual capitalists increasingly takes on a political character, compelling not just the bureaucracy but their militant unionist opposition to search for political programs, for political solutions. The essential truth of this is going to be brought home to the working class in the period ahead as they are driven into combat against the crushing burdens imposed upon them by the imperialist war drive.

The socialist revolution is not the product of simon-pure militancy, not a trade union act , but requires a high degree of consciousness, of maturity -- as we know, it requires the vanguard party. As life itself buffets the workers towards realization of the need for political struggle they will move forward to grasp the instruments at hand -- to attempt to shape and use them.

THE STRUGGLE WILL GO THROUGH THE PAC*-CCF (**the political action committee –Ed.*)

The PACs are already there, the structure is there, MPs, MLAs, municipal members, are already there. The workers will attempt to use what is waiting for them. As the already existing policy and personnel reveal their insufficiency or treachery, the struggle for a new policy, a new leadership will unfold -- from within the PACs. The direction of this politicization of the masses, in other words, will go through the CCF for the PACs are already committed to follow, and not just follow but determine, the whole course of development of the CCF.

It is false to say that strikes will not bother the CCF... to say that the big struggles will go through the unions and not the CCF. It is incorrect to pose work in the CCF constituency clubs as being in some way in contradiction to work in the unions. There is no truth in the idea that the best workers, those most susceptible to the advanced ideas of revolutionary Marxism, are in the unions and not the CCF.

The CCF no longer exists merely as constituency clubs -- it exists in the PACs. The CCF is already more the PACs than it is the constituency clubs, even though the latter may carry on in a more sustained basis at this stage of the class struggle in Canada; and it will become more so as the workers move forward towards the generalization of their militant economic struggles.

UNION WORK REQUIRES CCF ORIENTATION

Our proletarian party as it increasingly integrates itself in the unions automatically forces upon itself a CCF orientation. The best workers, the most advanced, are already in or moving to the PACs. It is not possible to do effective political work in the unions today, and this is our task in the unions, without going through the experiences of the workers in the PACs. (To be a leader in the PACs requires membership in no other party than the CCF; this restriction has been imposed on the PACs by the leadership and has been accepted by those workers outside of our ranks who understand the need for independent political action.) Obviously the only worker that would get a serious hearing as to the direction PA work should take, would be one already an active participant in PA work (a CCF card holder). Even if our party were only to carry on a limited and sustained fraction work in the CCF there is no doubt that the core of our CCF fraction would be our comrades in the mass industrial unions of the CCL-CIO. **To be oriented towards effective work in the unions means to be oriented to the PAC--CCF.**

The decisive struggles against the trade union bureaucracy are destined not to take place outside the PACs, outside the CCF, but inside them. Even at this stage we can see certain evidences to sustain this contention. We say at this stage, for it is necessary to note that neither in the CCL nor the TLC has there yet developed any serious opposition to the bureaucratic misleaders, other than the Stalinist opposition which has suffered crushing blows and is on the decline. In the big URW Goodyear local in New Toronto both the Base group supporters and the Buckmaster group supporters were CCFers. We understand from our B.C. comrades that a sizeable bloc of the opposition to the CCF IWA bureaucracy is also CCF. This is the image of the future.

IS THE CCF (AND THE UNIONS) A TRAP?

Trotsky in his famous sketch published under the title TRADE UNIONS IN THE EPOCH OF IMPERIALIST DECAY (Labor Challenge mid-July 1946) pointed out the tendency of the growing together of the trade unions with the capitalist state... their tendency towards bureaucratization which flows directly from this. Of the trade union bureaucracy, and the same holds true for the CCF bureaucrats, he said: "In their eyes the chief task lies in 'freezing' the state from the embrace of capitalism, in weakening its dependence on trusts, in pulling it over to their side. This position is in complete harmony with the social position of the labor aristocracy and the labor bureaucracy who fight for a crumb in the share of super-profits of imperialist capitalism. The labor bureaucrats do their level best in words and deeds to demonstrate to the 'democratic' state how reliable and indispensable they are in peace-time and especially in time of war."

This trend, inherent in imperialism, and which fascism draws to its ultimate conclusions through its compulsory labor organizations, has raised the question that the CCF and the trade unions may become in this country the vehicles for the suppression and regimentation of the working class. To point to this tendency as an argument for opposition to a CCF orientation (we must note that it would also demand that we wage irreconcilable war against the trade unions too, in the spirit of the sectarian SLP) would be to overlook the nub of the whole question. Trotsky said that this is the inevitable trend of the unions that will reach fruition only "IN SO FAR AS THEY REMAIN ON REFORMIST POSITIONS, i.e., ON POSITIONS OF ADAPTING THEMSELVES TO PRIVATE PROPERTY, TO ADAPT THEMSELVES TO THE CAPITALIST STATE AND TO CONTEND FOR ITS COOPERATION."

This inherent tendency of the trade unions and the CCF forces us not to the simple recognition of the possibility but to intervene in the situation, to block it by joining in the struggle against it. "The matter at issue is essentially", Trotsky pointed out, "the struggle for influence over the working class." In the case of the unions we see the task as that of preventing the unions from remaining "on reformist positions," of building a new leadership around a revolutionary program. The future course of the unions, instruments for the dictatorship of the proletariat or instruments for the regimentation of the masses, this question will be decided by the rank and file, by the role played by the revolutionary vanguard. What Trotsky said for the unions holds true for the CCF... at issue here too is "the struggle for influence over the working class" -- for the CCF is the political expression of the working class. The same forces that are at work making certain our success of preventing the unions from adapting themselves to private property are at work generating the Left wing in the CCF from which the mass revolutionary party will arise.

NEW CONTENT AND OLD FORMULAS

To concede the dual character of the reformist trade union and labor bureaucracy, to predict that the struggle for the adherence of the Canadian workers is going to develop within the CCF, is not a capitulation to reformism, it is not holding out the perspective of the CCF -- certainly as we know it now -- making the revolution. The revolutionary party must be built, it is essential to the success of the inevitable revolutionary struggles of the masses. It can only be built on the program of the Fourth International. To state the above is only to face the facts and to project before the cadre that the proletarian revolution has already built (in) its tasks.

The CCF has a new content that must be recognized -- it is the mass party of Canadian labor developing in the most revolutionary period in world history.

It is no longer permissible for comrades to attempt to estimate the CCF and let themselves and the party be guided by ready made formulas such as "social democratic," "reformism," "political support of the bourgeoisie," "third party of the bourgeoisie," etc.

Writing to our French comrades as to whether these definitions were correct when applied to the French Socialist Party in 1934, Trotsky replied: "Both yes and no. Rather no than yes... the impossibility of applying henceforth a simple customary definition is of itself the unmistakable expression of the fact that we have to do (deal) with a centrist party, which as a consequence of the rapid evolution of the country still retains at its two poles the sharpest contradictions. One would have to be a hopeless scholastic in order to be prevented by the label Second International from seeing what is actually taking place. Only a dialectical definition of the Socialist Party, i.e., above all a concrete appraisal of its internal dynamics can give the Bolshevik-Leninists the possibility of drawing up a correct perspective and of adopting an active not a waiting policy." There is another quote from the same article by the Old Man* that we think pertinent to the discussion:

**Leon Trotsky: "The essence of the democratic state consists, as is well known, in the fact that everyone has the right to say and write what he pleases but that the big capitalists retain the power of deciding all important questions. This result is obtained by means of a complicated system of partial*

concessions (reforms), of illusions, bribery, deceit and intimidation. When the economic possibility of partial concession (reforms) becomes exhausted, Social Democracy ceases to be 'the main political support of the bourgeoisie.' This signifies: capital can no longer rely upon a tamed 'public opinion', it needs a state apparatus which is independent of the masses... i.e., Bonapartist." (i.e., society ruled by an single individual positioned above all classes in times of crisis, as a proxy of the bourgeoisie' –Ed.)

"Parallel with this shift in the state system very important shifts take place within Social Democracy. in the period of the decline of Reformism (especially in the decade after the war) the internal regime of Social Democracy becomes a reproduction of the regime of bourgeois democracy; every member of the party can speak and think as he wishes but the decisions are taken by the tops of the apparatus who are closely linked up with the State. To the same extent as the bourgeoisie loses the possibility of ruling by relying upon the public opinion of the exploited, the leaders of Social Democracy lose the possibility of guiding the public opinion of their own party. But the reformist leaders, unlike the leaders of the bourgeoisie have not at their disposal a coercive apparatus. That is why WHILE THE PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY OF THE BOURGEOIS STATE DISAPPEARS THE INTERNAL DEMOCRACY OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY, ON THE CONTRARY, BECOMES AN EVER GREATER REALITY." (end quote)

WHAT THE CCF IS

Programmatically the CCF is a right wing Social Democratic (reformist) movement moving further to the right with an internal regime which has become less democratic in the past year. **But its definition does not stop there, it only begins. Our definition must be dialectical. "A concrete appraisal of its internal dynamics" must be made. Such a definition is essential to arrive at a correct orientation. Involved here is not just another working class party, not just a party larger than our own, but the proletariat itself (the class) organized and in the process of being organized. The question: what are the "internal dynamics" of the CCF (that) can be equally correctly posed: what are the internal dynamics of the Canadian proletariat?**

The latter question is answered by the Political Resolution. The Canadian proletariat are on the eve of a vast revolutionary upsurge. Impelled forward by the crushing burdens that the crisis of Canadian and world capitalism thrusts down upon them, under the inspiration of the Asiatic and European revolutions, the Canadian workers will flood into the CCF.

There the struggle against reformism, against the labor lieutenants of the capitalist class, against the transmission belts of bourgeois ideology into the ranks of labor, will be joined. As the masses move forward, on the course that they have already set, to flood into the CCF, the internal democracy which has been monstrously curbed in the past period of apathy and disillusionment that has emboldened the Coldwell leadership, will become an ever greater reality.

The struggle for a program that will express the opposition of the masses to the oppressive burden of the war and the encroachments of the Bonapartist state will thrust up a new leadership that will do battle with the Coldwell-Douglas-Millard leadership. The program will be the transitional program of the 4th; the leadership will be the Trotskyist leadership of the Canadian revolution.

AN ENTRIST ORIENTATION NECESSARY

It is no longer sufficient for our party to have merely a CCF orientation, the fundamental orientation of the party since 1946. The question of entry -- the dissolution of the independent party and the integration of its forces knit together as a fraction in the CCF -- stands posed before us. For us this matter is settled on the basis of (1) The present weakness and isolation of the independent party, (2) Recognition that the course of development of the masses is through the CCF.

The comrades who gathered together in 1946 to organize the independent party, as we have noted from the Political Resolution they adopted 2 years later did not as we have previously shown by any means reject the possibility of being faced again with the necessity of reentering the CCF to build the mass revolutionary party.

While we called ourselves a party we knew we were a party in name and program only -- in that we were the only revolutionary tendency striving to win the adherence of the most advanced Canadian workers. One of our key purposes in organizing the independent party was to pull together, to re-consolidate the old cadre of the movement which had entered the CCF early in 1937 (the B.C comrades had entered earlier) (and) had come out early in 1939 only to be thrust back again as a protective device with the outbreak of the war. A large part of the old cadre had become demoralized and as subsequent developments showed was almost completely wiped out. We hoped also to take advantage of the 1945-46 strike wave which developed completely outside the CCF. We also visualized that it would be possible to attract to our ranks Stalinist workers who were alienated by that movement's long class collaborationist policies, and of course CCF dissidents.

What Stalinist splits there were, McKean, Dube, and Djajic, did not develop our way, although our party and its press have forced the bureaucracy to devote considerable attention to us, not as fascists but as ultra-leftists. Opposition tendencies that developed in the CCF did not split our way -- aside from the recent insignificant split to the Socialist Party of Canada on the West Coast there have been no splits -- dissidents apparently just dropping away into inactivity. What opposition has developed in the CCF since the pulling out of our CCF fraction to form the independent party did not go to the Stalinists -- that this might take place was one of the arguments advanced by the 1946 resolution defending the setting up of the independent party -- the need to provide a pole of counter-attraction to the LPP for CCF dissidents. While the independent party of Canadian Trotskyism failed to make direct gains from the opposition which has arisen in the CCF to date to the Coldwell policy and leadership the opposition developed in the general direction of Trotskyism (see "Trotskyism and the CCF" (mid-April 1951 *Labor Challenge*).

Even then, in 1946, we maintained, in relation to our overall strength, a CCF fraction of considerable scope -- our comrades in isolated communities where there appeared no perspective of building party branches were instructed to remain in the CCF or to go into the CCF. While in 1946 we held out the perspective of building the independent party we had a CCF orientation with the main emphasis on independent work -- our CCF fraction had a split perspective.

In 1948 the party, under pressure of events (the changed situation with regards to the CCF on the Canadian political scene and rank and file reaction to the leadership's support of the war drive which resulted in the rise of Left-wing formations in Toronto and B.C.), while maintaining this perspective, shifted the emphasis to CCF fraction work at the expense of independent work -- with the fraction work

having not a split perspective but a long range perspective. The 2nd National Convention this month must make its fundamental task the redirection of the party, the preparation of our cadre for entry into the CCF.

The political steeling of the party and the organization shifts that must be made to reorient the party in this direction must be made not on the basis of what the CCF is now; the present organization and political state of the CCF/PACs and the CCF constituency clubs, but on what they are certain to become, on their (the Canadian labor movement's) "internal dynamics", on the understanding of the period into which we are entering.

ENTRY -- PAST AND FUTURE

The previous entry made by our movement in 1937 was made on completely different premises. At that time the CCF had no influence to speak of in the unions, even as they were then constituted. It existed entirely as constituency clubs, much fewer in number and influence in the communities and with very little apparatus at their disposal. The premises for that entry as advanced by its proponents were; that the CCF was growing, that it was undergoing a wave of radicalization, that left wing groupings of some scope were forming, creating an atmosphere favorable for our entry and the projection of our ideas, that our weak and isolated forces were prohibited from coming into effective contact with this development by the formal existence of the independent party, that it was necessary to integrate our forces in the CCF in order to effectively influence and capture the developing left wing. The task was propagandistic, one of influencing an advanced layer of the class with our advanced ideas. The perspective was a split perspective -- the corralling of the leftist core, pulling it out of the CCF, leaving the CCF in a much less competitive condition and re-establishing our party on a firmer, stronger footing. The sizeable bloc of opponents to the entry challenged its advisability solely on the validity of this analysis of the situation (a short evaluation of this entry and its lessons is contained in Barry Brent's article "The Tactic of Entry," June 1949 Internal Bulletin).

The party's reorientation towards entry has for its task not the rather circumscribed, though of course essential, job of putting added flesh on the bones of the vanguard (this will be done in the process of the entry); its perspective is that of setting into motion the Canadian working class along the road to revolutionary action.

Its premise is not the existence of left formations (such as the Ginger Group or the Socialist Fellowship which were reflections not of the leftward pressure of the masses on the CCF but a reaction in the CCF to the rightward course of the leadership pointed up by the 1950 convention) although genuine and extensive revolutionary tendencies exist in the CCF as witnessed by the resolutions submitted to the 1951 B.C. provincial convention (mid-June 1951 *Labor Challenge*). Nor is its premise an increase in internal democracy in the party or a wave of growth.

Its fundamental premise is -- the CCF under the impact of the next upsurge will embrace the class. The class will go there and nowhere else; there it will undergo the experience of reformism -- and there, given the perspective of world and Canadian capitalism, will move forward to the revolutionary solution of its problems.

THE INDEPENDENT PARTY HAS NO PERSPECTIVE

The other key premise is of course the weakness and isolation of our forces. Even allowing that we may have completely missed some favorable and promising opportunities, that we may have bungled others that we were aware of and attempted to intervene in, we can only believe that our almost 100% proletarian party, entrenched to a high degree in the unions, with effective fractions in the CCF, that has projected itself into several electoral campaigns winning surprising support, remains weak and isolated due to objective conditions. One of these objective conditions is the CCF. Despite our CCF orientation and all -- so much so are the workers already committed to the CCF, to go through it, it is a formidable barrier to our growth now. **Organized as an independent party the revolutionary vanguard has no real perspective of growth -- it has a perspective only through entry because already the class has political party affiliations -- CCF affiliations.**

The party must gear itself to meet the next upsurge of the masses. The question is posed: immediate dissolution of the party NOW and the integration of its forces in the CCF NOW, or the complete and conscious realignment of the party, re-enforcing our fraction, giving it a long term no-split perspective, hardening it for its tasks and preparing the party to meet the upsurge and go with it when it commences to move into the CCF.

THE DANGERS OF IMMEDIATE ENTRY

The Political Resolution states that "entry at the present time would have liquidationist aspects for our movement." Our most experienced and able comrades would be unable to get into the CCF at this time, even were we to immediately go through the formality of dissolving the RWP, thus removing the brand of "membership in an opponent political party." There is no Left of such a character within the CCF that would pave the way for their entrance, either by sponsoring their membership or by giving it tacit support. On the contrary what Left there is, itself being accused of Trotskyism by the Coldwell witch-hunters, would be paralyzed with fear by such moves, possibly even stand in their way of entry.

Should an entry be attempted now those comrades who would be unable to get in, a high percentage of our membership and our most experienced comrades, would be cut off from any independent work. They would be cast, until the next upsurge opens the doors of the CCF, in the role of advisors and counselors to those who could get in to carry out the entry... forced to sit on the sidelines, their political skills to a large extent wasted for the entrust core would be confronted not so much with political problems as with the task of integration.

Deprived of the leading comrades, the entrust core would be a few handfuls of comrades scattered across the country -- unable in our opinion, if only through sheer weakness, to carry out such a formidable job. Comparatively inexperienced and immature, confronted with an extremely difficult task, the entrust core may well mature under the experience by leaps and bounds... but it would also be confronted with the danger of demoralization and complete paralysis.

The latter danger is a very real one, for the task is, as comrade Pilar wrote us: "something of a long duration, starting from the present level of political consciousness in the CCF, which is most likely very low, where WE will have to organize (starting almost from scratch), A LEFT WING (as

broad as possible at the beginning) .. tactical maneuvers of such amplitude can only be successfully and profitably carried but by highly politically educated, matured, firm, and disciplined cadre."

The truth is, in our opinion, that we have not yet a cadre of sufficient strength, maturity and homogeneity to deploy in such a struggle. The cadre to carry out an entry has yet to be built. At this time we could not hope to build it in the process of entry. The task is to organize a Left Wing almost from scratch. While the situation is more favorable in some parts of the country, generally speaking we would be compelled to move with extreme slowness, with extreme care not to expose ourselves at this stage even as a loose fraction, let alone a Trotskyist formation with a purpose, a direction.

PUT FLESH ON OUR BONES

The radicalisation of the masses through the CCF, while clearly revealed to us is as yet a thing of the future. Thanks to the crucial period in which we live there is considerable unevenness in the developing consciousness of the working class -- not we insist of such a degree that permits us to believe that the independent revolutionary party has a perspective -- but to the degree that, prior to the coming upsurge which will force CCF entry upon us, we can put some real flesh on our bones.

There is a limited arena for the growth of the forces of Trotskyism organized as an independent party. This is of course clear to us on the basis of the small gains we have made despite the existence and competition of the CCF. Under the impact of the colonial revolutions, the crisis in Europe and, the unfolding crisis in this country, a scattering of workers are searching for a movement with a truly scientific explanation of the unfolding events and a program that explains the tasks ahead. While so far dissident forces developing in both the Stalinist LPP and the CCF have not come our way but have broken up in apathy and disillusionment, the impact of events will set off more of these dissident tendencies -- their general course of development will continue the same way but there is the possibility of picking up some of them.

The orientation of the party towards entry means therefore at this time: 1) the ideological preparation of the party for entry, the maintenance of the independent party, the continued publication of the paper, intensive subscription work, participation in elections where feasible -- all that we have been doing but on a more limited basis because it is necessary that we commence 2) the extension, wherever possible, of our CCF fraction, with more time and attention being devoted to this task. The CCF constituency clubs and PACs fraction work becomes, now that we know the political direction of the class struggle in this country, the supreme work of the party.

Because of the unevenness of the development of class consciousness in some areas in this vast country, we are thinking particularly of British Columbia, although the coming events are going to drastically modify this unevenness, it may be possible and advisable to carry out a partial entry -- a section of the party entering into the CCF in advance of the rest of the party. The party must keep its fingers on the pulse of the CCF and be prepared upon comparatively short notice to make such maneuvers with appropriate adjustments in its work in the rest of the country. It is obvious that such an action would require complete agreement, understanding and enthusiasm, on the part of those comrades immediately involved.

THE TASKS OF OUR INCREASED CCF FRACTION

The Political Resolution states: "The exact inter-relations between our partial entry and independent work must be determined by the concrete circumstances, within the framework of our need to build a cadre and our overall entry orientation in which that need is a key factor."

The task of the CCF fraction is one of recruiting CCFers to a Left Wing, if such exists, or, when none exists, influencing them in the direction of building a Left Wing. Where functioning CCF and CCYM clubs are now void of possibilities it may be advisable for comrades to go about with the building of new clubs. Utilizing the appeal of the CCF-CCYM label, the connections and prestige of that movement, it will be possible to build proletarian Left Wing clubs. This will not be building for the CCF Right Wing leadership, but in every sense of the word, for the approaching revolution.

Advancing appropriate aspects of our transitional program, immunizing the Left from Stalinism, our fraction will cautiously go about the job of building up a Trotskyist fraction. Recruits to the fraction will be made familiar with the full program of Trotskyism so that they can work more effectively but will remain in the CCF to aid in the extension of the Left Wing and help assure our hegemony over it.

Already, in the process of work, our CCF fraction has come in contact with dissident tendencies moving out of the CCF. As long as there is no Left Wing that appears to be a viable one, the possibilities of the opposition to the CCF leadership and its policies being expressed in this way is a recurring one. Our CCF fraction must not hesitate to conduct itself in such a way as to ensure that those precious forces are not dissipated but directed to the independent party. To assure that these forces are not lost, depending among other things upon their scope and character, our fraction or sections of it may be forced to adopt a split tactic -- pull out with them in order to take them to the party. There should be no hesitation on our part to adopt such a tactic for by so doing it may be possible to completely transform the situation with regards to the independent party -- thus assuring us of a cadre of sufficient strength and maturity to carry out an effective entry at a future date.

The work of the CCF fraction will be of untold value in preparing the ground for the entry of those comrades now barred from entry, by building the Left. Their experiences will prepare the rest of our forces for entry, familiarizing them in advance with all the complex and difficult problems of carrying out revolutionary work in such a milieu.

The independent party, while giving the Right Wing a wedge to charge the Left with being agents of an opponent political party, can be of inestimable aid to our CCF fraction. Its press, its public meetings, can be judiciously and circumspectly used, particularly until such time as the Left is able to take on a more concrete form with a press etc. of its own. The work of the party will have to be supplementary, as far as it is possible to make it so, and not antagonistic to the work of the fraction. For instance: it would be ludicrous and in complete contradiction with an entrust orientation, not to speak of a general CCF orientation, for our party to support Stalinist candidates, regardless of specific circumstances, against CCF candidates in elections. Nor could the party consider running candidates in opposition to CCF candidates. Such actions would do irremediable harm to our CCF fraction's work and prejudice the success of our future entry.

NOT GIVING UP THE PARTY -- BUILDING THE PARTY

Does the orientation of the party to entry, its direction towards giving up the independent banner for integration in the CCF, signify a defeat for our movement? In the sense that it is based on recognition that Trotskyism, confronting the masses as an independent party has no perspective -- yes. But in every real sense NO.

Revolutionists take the workers as they are. It is not possible to impose the distilled essence of the great revolutionary experiences of the international labor movement, the Trotskyist program, on the Canadian working class like a straight-jacket. The Canadian workers are moving towards the socialist revolution at their own pace, on the basis of their own experiences. The forces of Canadian Trotskyism, in the past five years of intense independent activity, have fructified these experiences for broad layers of the workers, broader than many of us think.

Considerable progress has been made in consolidating a cadre, the laying down of the foundations of the cadre that will give leadership to the struggle for a socialist Canada. But given the objective conditions that exist -- nothing we can or could do could change the main line of development of the working class through the CCF. It is necessary to go through the experiences of the class with the class.

While firm on political principle Leninism-Trotskyism has always combined this firmness with the greatest organizational flexibility -- tactical flexibility to serve principle.

Trotsky in 1935 to our American comrades, wrote: *"Bolshevik intransigence is indissolubly bound to an understanding of the real processes, to a flexibility in maneuvering with regard to groupings and even individuals. Contrariwise, each sectarian wants to have his own labor movement. By the repetition of magic formulas he thinks to force an entire class to group itself around him. But instead of bewitching the proletariat, he always ends up by dispersing his little sect."*

Our party must make a maneuver -- a maneuver on the grand scale -- it must link its forces up with the developing political expression of the working class. A new perspective opens up for us. Where before the road to the building of the mass revolutionary party was obscure, we can now clearly see our way -- to and through the CCF. The party must be keyed to face the new turn -- this is the task of this convention.

We must enter into the new turn with the utmost confidence and enthusiasm, with the knowledge that we are going to aid those workers now in the CCF and those who will be in there tomorrow to learn the method of revolutionary action, that we are going to combat the attempts of the Coldwell and Millard leadership and the Stalinists to prevent us from forging firm bonds with the workers, that we are on the road to establishing a genuine mass base for Trotskyism in Canada.

*** **

"The first step of great importance for every country newly entering into the movement is always the organization of the workers as an independent political party, no matter how, so long as it is a distinct workers' party... and the masses must have the time and the opportunity to develop and can only have the opportunity when they have their own movement -- no matter in what form so long as it is their own

movement -- in which they are driven further by their own mistakes and learn wisdom by hurting themselves." -- Engels, 1886

July, 1951

(End – all italics and bolds by the web eds.)